

The Challenge

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BRAC criteria focus on 'Military Value'

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 28, 2004 — Military value will be the focus for the final selection criteria to be used in the 2005 round of Base Realignment And Closures.

That value represents the ability of the installation to contribute to DoD future mission capabilities and operational readiness, said Philip Grone, principal assistant deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, in an interview with American Forces Radio and Television Service Feb. 26. In fact, four of the eight guiding principles are centered on military value.

The final selection criteria are also based on factors such as potential costs and savings, community support and environmental considerations, Grone said. However, he added, "ultimately, the secretary must base his recommendations principally on how it contributes to our current and future mission capabilities, how it contributes to military value, how it supports the force."

The selection criteria for the upcoming BRAC round were finalized and published Feb. 12 in the Federal Register, a publication that fulfills the legal requirements to publish items such as proposed rules and notices, among other documents, for public comment.

Grone said Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld approved the final selection criteria after an earlier public comment period for the draft version. The BRAC timetable also called for sending the draft and final criteria to defense congressional committees. Congress has 30 days to carry out any disapproval action on the criteria.

More review work continues in coming months on items such as a force structure plan and infrastructure inventory. The secretary makes final recommendations on base realignment and closures to an independent commission in May 2005.



(From L-R) Mr. Bob Marshall, general manager of Plumas Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative, Col. Paul Plemmons, commander SIAD and Mrs Sue Ritz, SIAD contracting officer signed an electric utility contract in March as part of BRAC 1995 allowing the electric cooperative to provide electrical services to this area.

The commission's nine members will review the secretary's BRAC recommendations before making their own recommendations to the president by September 2005. The president then either approves or rejects the commission's recommendation before sending them to Congress in November 2005. Congress has 45 legislative days to enact a joint resolution rejecting the recommendations or they become binding.

While the mechanics of the basic BRAC process are similar to prior rounds, Grone pointed out that the department's emphasis on transformational options and a "capabilities-based" approach is a significant change. "BRAC can make a profound contribution to our defense posture by realigning our infrastructure to support the new defense strategy," he explained.

RESTORATION PROJECTS

A Community and Restoration Advisory Board Meeting was held March 10 at the Skedaddle Inn. The purpose of these bi-monthly public meetings is to inform the public about restoration activities in progress here.

The next Community/RAB meeting will be held May 12 May at the Skedaddle Inn. The Community meeting begins at 5:45 p.m. and concludes at 6:30 p.m. The RAB meeting follows and ends about 8:00 p.m.

Items on the agenda in May include a presentation by the CAL-EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act section, Lorraine Larsen-Hallock. She will be discussing the EPA's requirements and involvement in the closure of Sierra Army Depot's OB/OD grounds. The POC for the RAB meeting is Ms. Lisa Huston, installation restoration program at (530)-827-4205 and the POC for the Community meeting is Susie Stevens, public affairs officer.

And equally important, he added, emphasis will be placed on joint utilization for functions and facilities, as well as converting what he called "waste to warfighting." "We have facilities that we no longer require that are costing us millions or billions of dollars to maintain over their useful life. Those

facilities are not adequate to the mission; we don't need them. Those resources that are devoted to facilities we do not need, need to be converted to warfighting capabilities," he said.

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